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## **Project Context**

The Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia (CEMCA) catalysed and supported by Rashtriya Vigyan Evam Prodyogiki Sanchar Parishad (RVSP), Department of Science and Technology, Government of India, New Delhi, to coordinate a project entitled Science for Women (SFW), through the Community Radio Stations (CRs) in the country. The pilot phase of the project was undertaken at Anna FM, Anna University, and Chennai during the year 2004-2005. In the preparatory phase, CEMCA conducted an exploratory workshop on March 8 and 9, 2007, under the aegis of RVSP that was attended by representatives from 18 Campus Community radio stations and two NGOs, following which about 18 proposals were submitted for consideration for funding to carry out SFW through the campus community stations.

CEMCA with its expertise in research, community participation and capacity building, submitted a proposal to RVSP for implementing and monitoring in order to ensure that the programmes are community oriented, made with community participation, and of high quality and relevance. The implementation facilitation has two main components to it, which are as following:--

1. A baseline and community and assess the needs study (CNA) to profile the community, capture its current practices and knowledge base vis-à-vis a range of issues/subjects that will be addressed through the programmes.
2. A capacity building of the production teams in terms of ensuring community participation.

Subsequently, RVSP decided to consider awarding SFW Project to 14 CRs in a phased manner and CEMCA was engaged to carry out the study. The following pages report the preliminary findings of the study carried out at Holy Cross FM at the Holy College at Tiruchinapalli.

# **PART I**

FEED FORWARD / BASELINE STUDY REPORT

# 1. Feed forward /Baseline Study Design

## **Objectives**

The objectives of the baseline study are to capture:--

- the socio-economic and demographic profile of the target listeners
- their media habits, particularly with reference to Radio,
- issues of concern for the community like local area problems that could be find space on the community radio
- willingness/readiness of women to participate in the community radio initiative
- build awareness for the Community Radio and SFW

## **1.0 Study Methodology**

### **1.1 Sample**

Two areas, from lower economic strata that fall in the catchment's area of the CR station were selected purposively. Any woman, above 16 years of age, residing in these areas, was enlisted as a survey respondent. One woman was drawn from each household, bringing the total number of households covered in the study to 1000.

### **1.2 Study Instrument**

A structured interview schedule is used as the survey instrument. It was designed and by CEMCA and translated into the local language with the help of the participating institution (in this case Holy Cross College), revalidated by an independent expert and pretested.

In keeping with the objectives, the questionnaire consisted of five distinct sections that aimed at capturing:

1. socio-economic and demographic profile of the audience
2. media habits-ownership, consumption, with special emphasis on radio
3. local problems and issues the community faces and their current information sources for solutions
4. inputs for CR by way of identifying topics on which the community would like programmes
5. willingness to participate and contribute to CR in general and specifically to identify potential participants in the CR programmes

### **1.3 Data Collection**

The field teams for data collection comprised:

- Staff coordinator from Holy Cross College
- Students for Holy Cross College
- Community representatives from the catchments areas

The teams received intensive training under the direct supervision of CEMCA Programme Officer. Two independent experts engaged by CEMCA conducted the training in the local language. A mock interview was conducted to the trainees a good feel of the process.

## **Quality Control**

To ensure high quality data, CEMCA experts were present during the survey and regularly went to the field to random back checks. Further, all questionnaires were physically verified for completeness, before sending them for data processing.

### **1.4 Data Entry**

A team of post graduate students of computer applications from Holy Cross College were trained by CEMCA experts in data entry. The data structure was designed and provided by an expert engaged by CEMCA. Data were entered at Holy Cross College under CEMCA supervision.

### **1.5 Data Analysis**

Data were analysed at Delhi by an expert engaged by CEMCA for the project, according to a pre-designed analysis framework developed by CEMCA.

## **2. Findings and Discussion**

### **2.0 About Holy Cross FM**

Holy Cross College is a highly reputed Arts and Science college for women in the State of Tamil Nadu. It is a Catholic institution established in 1923 and has a history of academic excellence. One of the oldest colleges for women in South India, it is currently affiliated Bharathidasan University. The college was granted autonomous status in 1987 and accredited by National Assessment and Accreditation Council in 1999 with FIVE STARS, and in the year 2005, the college was re-accredited with "A" Grade. The college offers 23 undergraduate and 15 post graduate courses in addition to M. Phil, Doctorate, Diploma and other courses and has student strength of over 4000.

Holy Cross FM station was formally inaugurated on June 25, 2007 and currently has a transmission of 8 hours daily, four hours in the morning 6-10 AM and four hours in the evening 4-8 PM (see annexure 3, for Transmission Fixed Point Chart). The station is well equipped and has a fulltime station manager and technical staff.

Science for Women project is being undertaken by them under the name "*Pudiya Jananam*" (meaning a new birth).

## 2.1 Community Profile: Study Areas

The two locations chosen for the study were:

1. **Jeeva Nagar** - A low income housing locality with about 1000 households, located around 1 km radius of Holy Cross college. Most of the homes are single room units without proper toilet or a municipal drainage system in place. The area has a mix of different religions.
2. **Dharmanathapuram** – located about 2-3 km from the college, this is a housing locality of about 500 households, mostly semi-permanent structures without proper toilet facilities. The area has a mix of Hindus and Christians.

## 2.2 Socio-economic and Demographic Profile

The respondents were distributed across age groups ranging from 16-50, with a majority of them in the age group of 20-40 (62%). Hindus were the dominant religious group (44%), followed by Muslims (35%) and Christians (21%). A majority of them were married (80%). Nearly one fourth of them were illiterate (22%) but a sizable number had 6-9 years of schooling (44%). Over half the women were homemakers (51%) and nearly one fourth were wage labourers (22%).

A majority of the households are male headed (89%), with most of the men residing in the same city (86%), thus male migration is not a dominant feature of these communities.

## Lifestyle Indicators

Being urban slums, one third of the houses are small multi-storied structures, where about a third of the respondents live (30%) and over a fourth live in semi-pucca dwellings (26%). A sizeable portion (19 %) also lives in semi-permanent thatched huts. Nearly all the homes have electricity connections (95%), perhaps due to a welfare scheme by the state government, whereby economically poor houses were provided with an electricity connection and a light bulb. About a third of them use LPG/cooking gas (37%) and kerosene (32%), but over a fourth use wood fuel (28%). Nearly half the respondents use shared toilet facilities (50%), whereas about half have their own private toilets (48%). However, most toilets do not have running water and the more prevalent practice is for children to use any available open space right outside the homes. Men too used relatively deserted areas around the housing colony.

In terms of household possessions, most common is a mixer/grinder owned by over half (52%), followed by a tape recorder and two wheelers, roughly by one fifth and CD players (11%). Income which appeared to be underreported, of most households was up to Rupees 1500 per month (57%). Smaller percentages were reported for the next higher categories up to 3000 (14%) and up to 5000 (9%). A sizeable proportion (13%) also reported monthly income above Rupees 20,000.

Though there are some NGO groups working in the area, less than a third are members of any Self Help group (29%). The prevalence of disabilities, physical and mental in the community is about four percent, which appears to be higher than the national average of 2.5 percent. It has been argued by civil society organisations that occurrence of disabilities, particularly mental, are higher in resource poor communities and frequently go underreported, and that the truer rate of prevalence would be closer to five percent, which this study appears to bear out. .

*See Table 1, for a composite socio-economic and demographic profile.  
Figures are indicated in percentages and the dominant categories are highlighted.*

**TABLE 1- SDE PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS**

<b>Attribute</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>AGE</b>	
1 Above 60	3.8
2 Between 51-60	7.6
3 Between 41-50	18.5
<b>4 Between 31-40</b>	<b>31.1</b>
<b>5 Between 21-30</b>	<b>29.7</b>
6 Between 16-20	7.9
7 Below 16	1.4
<b>RELIGION</b>	
1. Hindu	44.3
2. Muslim	34.8
3. Christian	20.7
4. Others	0.2

<b>MARITAL STATUS</b>	
1. Unmarried	11.9
<b>2. Married</b>	<b>80.0%</b>
3. Divorced/Separated	0.4
4. Widowed	7.5
<b>EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS</b>	
<b>1. Illiterate</b>	<b>22.4</b>
2. Literate(no formal)	2.3
3. School up to 5 years	15.5
<b>4. School up 6-9 years</b>	<b>43.6</b>
5. SSC/HSC	8.3
6. Under Graduate	3.8
7. Graduate/Post	2.6
10.Others	1.2
<b>OCCUPATION</b>	
<b>Homemaker</b>	<b>51.0</b>
<b>Wage labourer</b>	<b>22.8</b>
Self employed	9.6
Student	4.2
Others (govt/private sector employed; skilled workers, petty traders, retired , each less than 3 percent)	12

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<b>HOUSEHOLD HEADSHIP</b>	
<b>Male headed</b>	<b>89.3</b>
Female headed	10.7

<b>LIFE STYLE INDICATORS</b>		
<b>MIGRATION PATTERN – RESIDENCE OF MALE HOUSEHOLD HEAD</b>		
<b>Living in the same location</b>	<b>TYPE OF HOUSE</b>	<b>86.2</b>
Apartment/flats (multi storied buildings)		31.1
Others		13.8
Semi Pucca		26.1
Thatched/Hut		18.6
Independent house		13.1
Pucca		10.7
<b>HOUSEHOLDS WITH ELECTRICITY</b>		<b>94.4</b>
<b>SOURCE OF DRINKING WATER</b>		
<b>Common/shared tap</b>		<b>61.3</b>
Tap inside the house		38.4
<b>COOKING FUEL USED</b>		
LPG/Gas		36.9
Kerosene		32.4
Wood fuel		27.0
<b>TOILET FACILITIES</b>		
<b>Shared</b>		<b>50.1</b>
Private		47.9
No toilets (use open space etc)		2.0

<b>MONTHLY HOUSEHOLD INCOME</b>	
<b>Upto 1500</b>	<b>57.3</b>
1500-3000	14.5
3001-5000	8.9
5001-7500	3.5
7500-20,000	3.0
Above 20,000	12.8
<b>AVERAGE FAMILY SIZE</b>	<b>4.6</b>
<b>FAMILY COMPOSITION BY SEX</b>	
Male	49.9
Female	50.1
<b>FAMILY COMPOSITION BY AGE</b>	
Below 5 years	6.0
5-12 years	12.5
13-17 years	10.5
18 plus years	70.0
<b>SELF HELP GROUP MEMBERSHIP</b>	<b>29.6</b>
<b>PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES IN HH</b>	<b>4.3</b>
<b>HOUSEHOLD POSSESSIONS</b>	
<b>Mixer/Grinder</b>	<b>52.5</b>
Tape Recorder	20.3
Two Wheeler	19.5
CD Player	10.1
Refrigerator	3.9
<b>Telephones</b>	<b>8.3</b>
<b>Mobile Phone (Respondent's personal phone)</b>	<b>17.2</b>

## **2.3 Media Profile**

### **Ownership**

Television predictably is the most popular medium of entertainment and information with seventy percent of the respondents owning one. The Tamil Nadu Government, under some of its welfare schemes also distributed free/ subsidized colour television sets to a large number of slum dwellers, which could also explain the presence of a television. Nearly all those who own television also have a cable connection. In contrast, less than half the households own a radio. Newspaper subscription is low (17 %) and magazines negligible (7%).

### **Consumption**

Among the television channels, Sun TV is the most popular watched by over half the respondents (56%), with no other one contender to its popularity.

When it comes\* to Radio, currently only a little over a third (39%) own radios. Among these about 11 percent do not listen, thus bringing the radio listening households to 380 or 38 percent in the sample. Among the listeners, the popular channels are those of All

India Radio, both their FM and AM channels, mainly because there are few private offerings in this area. Interestingly, Holy Cross FM, test transmission was heard by a small number. Among those who radio, a vast majority are regular, listening every day (76%). Home listening is most common. The popular time slots for women appear to be 8-10 AM (53%) followed by 6-8 AM (44%) and to a lesser extent 10-1 PM. Radio is least heard in the afternoons, probably a time reserved for rest and television viewing. and the most liked aspects of FM are good music (52%) followed by useful information (22%).

*See tables 2, 3 and 4 for details*

**TABLE 2. MEDIA OWNERSHIP**

<b>Attribute</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Receiving newspapers at home	17.2
Subscribing to magazines	7.2
<b>Own Television</b>	<b>70.2</b>
Colour	46.1
Black/White	24.1
Total Cable connections (N=1000 )	59.1
<b>Cable Homes as percentage of TV Homes (n=702)</b>	<b>84.1</b>
<b>Own a Radio</b>	<b>39.1</b>
<b>Radio with FM band</b>	<b>37.5</b>

**TABLE 3 MEDIA CONSUMPTION (TELEVISION)**

<b>Most Watched Channels (Top 3)</b>	
Sun TV	56.2%
Vijaya TV	18.3%
JayaTV	12.3%

**TABLE 4 MEDIA CONSUMPTION (RADIO)**

<b>Frequency of listening Daily in the total sample</b>	<b>29.6</b>
Listenership among radio owners (n=391)	97.2
Daily listener ship among radio owners (n=391)	75.7
Non listener ship ( own radio but do not listen) (n=391)	2.8

**TABLE 5 RADIO LISTENING PATTERNS n=380**

<b>MOST HEARD CHANNELS (TOP 3)</b>	
<b>Rainbow FM</b>	<b>82.9</b>
Channel 1(AIR AM)	32.4
Kodai FM	10.3
<b>Holy cross FM</b>	<b>1.8</b>
<b>PLACE OF LISTENING</b>	
<b>Home</b>	<b>90.5</b>
Work Place	7.1
Others (travelling, neighbours, etc)	2.2
<b>TIME -BANDS OF LISTENERSHIP</b>	
6-8 AM	44.2
<b>8-10 AM</b>	<b>52.6</b>
10-1 PM	20.5
1-3 PM	2.4
3-5 PM	7.4
5-8 PM	5.3
8-10 PM	7.4
after 10PM	2.1
<b>MOST LIKED ASPECT OF FM RADIO</b>	
<b>Good Music</b>	<b>51.5</b>
<b>Useful information</b>	<b>21.7</b>
Others	9.5
Radio Jockey	8.9
Information about new things	4.7
Lively presentation	2.4

## 2.4 Audience Needs Assessment

Questions in this section tried to identify some common problems in the community, with a view to guide programme content. The basic list was drawn up in consultation with the Holy Cross College staff, based on their background knowledge of the area and preliminary field visits. Likewise, respondents were also asked about topics on which they would like to hear programmes.

An attempt was made to gauge their current sources of information on a variety of topics that is respondents were asked to name the source they were most likely to turn to when they needed some general information. E.g. If they wanted some information about children's health and well-being (preventive, not consultations when the child was sick). Further, the prevalence of some myths and superstitions in the community were also documented, with a view to using the CR channel to dispel these. Here again, the college staff and some community members were consulted to draw up a brief list of prevailing myths.

Predictably, the most common problems faced were related to the poor hygienic conditions of the surroundings, inadequate and uncovered drainage system, urban clutter and the practice of a common drinking water tap in an open area right outside the home, leading to a constant wet puddles. Thus, mosquitoes, pollution, flies and insects and bad drainage system were listed as problem by a substantial number of respondents. The mosquito menace was huge, with an overwhelming number of respondents (85%) identifying that as a number one problem. Several instances of malaria and *chikungunya* were reported by the community. Lack of employment opportunities among women (40%) and Gender discrimination (33%) were also reported by a sizable number.

Doctors and health workers were reported as the most common source of information on a variety of topics-though nearly one-third of respondents stated lack of doctors as a problem in itself. Elders in the family and community were also a frequently consulted source, particularly on nutritious food and general health matters- respondents referred to traditional and home remedies in this context. Notably, NGOs were also not mentioned as a source the community turns to for information.

On topics on which they would like programmes, the respondents were not very discerning, as an overwhelming majority said yes, to all the topics though they were given an option of saying they were either not interested in a topic or were not sure. However, this could also be because of an overall paucity of information sources on life skill and family education in the community. This is further supported by the way

respondents named only doctors as their main source of information rather than any media or community source, like NGOs.

About one fourth to over one third of the women believe and practice several of the common myths related to women's behaviour during pregnancy, menstruation and some common illnesses among children like measles and chicken pox.

*See Tables, 6, 7, 8 and 9 for details.*

**TABLE 6 COMMON PROBLEMS FACED BY THE COMMUNITY**

<b>Mosquitoes</b>	<b>85.0</b>
<b>Pollution</b>	<b>52.6</b>
Common lies and insect	43.6
Bad drainage systems	41.5
Lack of employment opportunities for women	39.8
Lack of employment opportunities for men	35.7
<b>Gender discrimination (expressed as restrictions on women's movement, education, employment and a general preference for male child)</b>	<b>33.4</b>
Lack of doctors	32.9
Community opposition to girls' education (higher, college level)	32.7
Water scarcity	27.0
Drunkenness among men	21.9

**TABLE 7 MOST CONSULTED INFORMATION SOURCE**

Problem	Most Consulted Sources		
	1	2	3
Children's health	Doctors/H W (32.7)	Elders/Family (29.5)	Media (25.1)
Nutritious food for the family	Elders (35.6)	Doctors/HW (33.3)	Media (17.7)
Respondents personal health	Doctors/H W (45.4)	Elders/Family (27.1)	Media (15.11)
General health of family	Doctors/H W (42.49)	Elders/Family (31.4)	Media (14.8)
Preventive care (during epidemics etc)	Doctors/H W (69.6)	Elders/Family (11.6)	Media (11.1)
Care in pregnancy	Doctors/H W (76.3)	Elders/Family (13.9)	Friends/neigh (4.8)
Adolescent girls' health	Doctors/H W (51.5)	Elders/Family (28.2)	Media (9.9)
Senior citizen's care	Doctors/H W (52.6)	Elders/Family (22.8)	Friends/neigh (10.7)

**TABLE 8: TOPICS ON WHICH RESPONDENTS WOULD LIKE PROG.**

Topic	Percentage
How to manage your home efficiently	92.7
How to keep your surroundings clean	92.7
Health and Hygiene – General	89.9
Health – Care of seniors /elders	88.6
Your personal health	87.7
Epidemics/Diseases	86.8
Starting a business at home	86.6
Traditional Health Tips	85.4
Literacy programmes in your area	84.4
Pollution Control in your surroundings	84.1
Vocational Training	78.2
Joining a SHG	77.6
Information Technology/Computers	75.3

**TABLE 9: PREVALENT COMMON MYTHS**

Myth	Percentage
Pregnant women should not eat papayas as it leads to miscarriage	41.0
Pregnant women should not move or go out during a solar eclipse as it leads to birth deformities in the child.	37.7
No medication should be taken during chicken pox, measles etc ( as it will anger the goddess who causes the disease in the first place)	32.8
Untouchables should be practiced during menstruation (i.e. menstruating women should be isolated and not allowed to participate in normal household and/or religious activities)	32.4
Women should not bathe during menstruation	26.8

## 2.5 Community Inputs for CR Channel

The objective of this group of questions was to test the community willingness and readiness for participation in the CR. A separate list was made of the more enthusiastic respondents that the CR station can draw upon immediately. **Subsequently, community members who were involved in the first round of capacity building exercise were also drawn from this list.**

More than half the respondents believed that community radio would be a good platform to discuss problems and find solutions and were willing to participate in the CR programmes, given the opportunity (53%). A slightly lesser (45%), but nevertheless a significant number of women were willing to define this method of participation by being community representatives and radio jockeys. A majority of women (68%), indicated a preference for group listening, which bears out the documented fact that women prefer learning and undertaking activities in a group, rather than as individuals as it also gives them a social space. The next section draws attention to the implications of these findings for the CR station.

*See Table 10 for details.*

**Table 10 ATTITUDES TO CR AND WILLINGNESS TO PARTICIPATE**

Attribute	Percentage
Can Radio help in discussing and finding solutions to some problems faced by the community?	52.4
Given the opportunity would you like to participate in CR?	53.1
If basic training is provided, would you like to be a community representative?	44.4
If basic training is provided, would you like to be a RJ?	44.8
Would you like to listen to programme sin a group with other women?	67.2

## 3. Implications for Holy Cross FM

In profiling the community, the objective was to understand certain aspects of the community that the CR can use as inputs to guide SFW programming, making it more focused and relevant to the listeners.

- Nearly two-thirds of the women are in the respondents are in the age group of 20-40, and an overwhelming majority are also married. Thus the topics chosen for programmes should be of interest to this age group e.g. like topics related to child bearing and child health.

- Over one fifth of the respondents are illiterate, for whom radio can be a significant way to impart information, breaking the literacy barrier.
- As a majority is educated, with more than five years of schooling and higher, the entry level of some programmes could be based on this. It would also be able to train these women in different aspects, including technical, of production.
- Most of the women are home makers, thus could be available for participation if the timings are made suitable to them, keeping their domestic commitments in view.
- Lack of employment opportunities for them was indicated as one of the problems and a keen interest evinced in vocational training and starting their own small enterprises at home. Only a small percent are members of self help groups and hardly anyone mentioned NGOs as a source of information. This indicates that the CR station would need to strengthen linkages with local NGOs; to rope them into doing more community based events and skill development activities which can be catalysed through the CR.
- Currently the most favoured time slot appears to be 8-10 AM, followed by 6-8 AM and 10 AM-1 PM Afternoon slots are least popular, contrary to a commonly held belief that women at home are relatively free in the afternoon and therefore might listen more in the afternoon. Perhaps this time is used for watching television. Thus the current timings of 7-7.30 AM and repeat at 9.30-10.00 AM are within the preferred slots.
- Currently only about 38 percent (380 households) are listening to Radio. The CR station needs to motivate the community to acquire radios and listen. As an incentive, radio sets can be given as gifts for participation. The college can also explore the possibility of acquiring radio sets in bulk at subsidized rates and distribute them through schools etc.
- Music, followed by useful information is main reasons for listening to radio. As indicated earlier, there are not many offerings by way of FM radio. A listening culture has to be built through SFW, by making programmes, relevant, participatory and interactive.
- As indicated earlier, respondents were not discerning in identifying topics on which programmes are sought this gives the station an opportunity to make creative programmes on the identified topics, by engaging the community members.
- Elders and family members were a frequently named source of information. The station can create a radio character representing an elderly member of the community (like a Radio Aunt; Radio Granny) and use the format to give information about various topics.

- Myths and beliefs abound in the community-this creates a good entry point for SFW to understand the myths and taboos further and use the programme to dispel these by stating the science (or lack of) behind these and impart correct, factual and useful information.

## **Awareness building**

One of the objectives of the baseline study was also to use the opportunity for awareness building both among the College public, (namely staff and students) as well as the community. This was done at various levels. In the first instance, they were engaged in the process of data collection. A team of community members participated both in the data collection and also acted as facilitators in recruiting respondent's further giving credibility to the exercise. In the door-to-door survey, the students and staff got an opportunity to meet 1000 women face-to-face to build an audience for the CR station in general and also explain SFW and its objectives. Thus a valuable asset was created for the CR station that can be tapped both for SFW and beyond as the database contains unique identification for the respondents, identifying those who are willing and ready to participate. During the course of the year, on different issues, where direct community participation is needed, these women will be called upon.

Further, each of the surveyed household carries a sticker, proclaiming the name of the programme SFW in Tamil i.e. ***"Pudiyā Jananam, Holy Cross FM 90.4"***, that will serve as a constant reminder of both. Test transmission was carried out during the survey period of one week which gave the listeners a first hand experience. Thus, Holy Cross FM has become a household name among 1000 households and acquired listener ship among the 380 radio listening households, which could extend to 1900, given the average family size of 4.6.

This report summarises the broad findings .Detailed tables in the appendix may be looked at for cross tabulations of habits and preferences with independent variables.